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Security Council
Fifty-third Year

Provisional

3905th Meeting
Tuesday, 14 July 1998, 12.55 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Felicio
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Costa Rica	Ms. Incera
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Japan	Mr. Konishi
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Portugal	Mr. Soares
	Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
	Sweden	Mr. Lidén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (S/1998/540)

98-85594 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 12.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (S/1998/540)

The President *(interpretation from Russian)*: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Central African Republic in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Fernandez (Central African Republic) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic, document S/1998/540.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1998/637, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bahrain, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, France, Gabon, Gambia, Japan, Kenya, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1182 (1998).

I give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Fernandez (Central African Republic): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council.

When the Security Council adopted its resolution 1159 (1998) on 27 March 1998 and created the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA), it was both an act of faith and a challenge. It was faith in the ability of the Security Council to influence the course of events in Africa in pursuit of international peace and security, which is the principal responsibility of the Council. It was a challenge to the Central African authorities to live up to the promises made in President Patassé's letter to the Secretary-General and thus help the Security Council to help the Central African Republic. I believe that I can say without fear of contradiction that both the Council and the Central African authorities have played well their respective parts.

The deployment of MINURCA within the short time given in resolution 1159 (1998) is a record for any United Nations peace operation and is indicative of what can be accomplished when there is a commitment to a peaceful process by the beneficiary of a Security Council action. It is also, I must say, testimony to the dedication of the Secretary-General and his staff, who spared no effort or personal exertion to ensure that the deadline was met. Permit me therefore, on behalf of my Government, to express my sincere gratitude to our Secretary-General and to his Special Representative, whose leadership of MINURCA has been of the quality one would expect from the experienced diplomat and negotiator that he is.

MINURCA's presence in our country, though confined to Bangui and its environs, has made a great difference in the preservation of peace and security. It has also proved to be indispensable in the promotion of

mutual confidence among all parties in the country in the preparations for the forthcoming legislative elections. That is why the Government and the people of the Central African Republic believe fervently that an enlargement of the mandate of the Mission to cover the entire country will enable the beneficial effect of its presence to be felt countrywide and therefore further accelerate the restoration of national peace, security and development.

It goes without saying that for any country — particularly one such as the Central African Republic, which has gone through traumatic events for the past two years — security is crucial to the ability of the people to pronounce themselves in free and fair elections on who should represent them and to resume the economic activities which will improve their quality of life.

In this context, the assistance of the United Nations is indispensable in establishing a security structure that will guarantee lasting peace long after the departure of the United Nations Mission. This implies, as a major element, the creation of a well-disciplined, multi-ethnic and professional army, as envisaged in the Bangui accords.

It is pertinent for me to mention that my Government has exerted itself to ensure the fulfilment of President Patassé's commitment to a transparent and accountable system of governance, which will accelerate the pace of national economic development and encourage our bilateral and multilateral partners to give the indispensable support that the country needs. The widely representative Government of National Unity has taken steps to improve the performance of the various ministries, and in particular those with responsibility for finance and economic development. Indeed, I can state here with some satisfaction that the collection of government revenues has doubled in the past 18 months. It is our hope that the Bretton Woods institutions, with which we are in negotiations for balance-of-payments and structural-adjustment support, will encourage those efforts.

The draft resolution which the Council has just adopted will go a long way towards fulfilling the hope which the intervention of the United Nations in the Central African Republic has aroused in our people — and also in Africans throughout the continent — that the Organization has not as a matter of principle decided to consign African issues to consultation and debate without action. It will be a confirmation of the dedication of the members of the Security Council to the maintenance and the promotion of peace and security. The Council's action in the Central African Republic concerns not only that country, but the entire subregion of Central Africa, which requires a period of stability and peace so that it can fully contribute to the development of the African continent. By helping to promote democracy in the Central African Republic through the involvement of the United Nations in the organization of the forthcoming elections, the Security Council will be spreading the democratic culture in the subregion. My Government is determined to cooperate fully, as it has indeed begun to do, with the independent and mixed Electoral Commission and with MINURCA to ensure that the elections are held in all serenity and transparency.

My President is determined that the example of the legislative elections will be an encouragement to the United Nations for further assistance in the democratization process, which as other examples have shown, is not a one-time event.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): I thank the representative of the Central African Republic for the kind words he addressed to me.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.